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AF ONLY - FOR AMBASSADOR STEARNS FROM AF/W

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2 AND 3

TAGS: PEPR, IV, US, XA

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S PROPOSED MEETING WITH IVORY COAST PRESIDENT FELIX HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IN GENEVA

REF: A) ABIDJAN 5868, B) USUN 2551, C) ABIDJAN 5802

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AF/W HAS PREPARED FOLLOWING BACKGROUNDER WHICH HAS BEEN WIDELY CLEARED IN DEPARTMENT FOR PROPOSED YOUNG/HOUPHOUET MEETING. IT WILL BE CABLED TO GENEVA WHEN MEETING DATE SET. WE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN YOUR COMMENTS.

1. AFRICA - WHEN YOU LAST SAW HOUPHOUET IN MAY 1977 HE CONCENTRATED MAINLY ON AFRICAN ISSUES NOTING THAT THE U.S.

SHOULD PLAY A GREATER ROLE IN AFRICA SO THAT THE WEST CAN COUNTER AN INCREASE OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AFRICA THAT WOULD THREATEN THE FLOW OF MINERAL RESOURCES FROM AFRICA TO THE WEST. HOWEVER, HIS EMPHASIS APPEARS TO BE ON FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS WHICH ATTRACT SOVIET CUBAN INTERVENTION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS. HE ALSO BELIEVES THE WEST SHOULD EXPLOIT ITS SUPERIOR CAPABILITY FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

2. SOUTH AFRICA - IN STEP WITH HIS CONTACTS LAST YEAR WITH VORSTER AND BOTHA, HOUPHOUET WILL PROBABLY PRESS FOR CONTINUED U.S. PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA BUT EXPECT ONLY SLOW PROGRESS.

3. RHODESIA - AT THE UPCOMING OAU SUMMIT IVORY COAST WILL OPPOSE ANY RESOLUTIONS FOR EXCLUSIVE SUPPORT OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. IVORY COAST BELIEVES THAT THE SALISBURY TERMS FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT ARE A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION BUT INADEQUATE. THEY FURTHER FEEL THAT UNQUALIFIED RADICAL AFRICAN AND COMMUNIST SUPPORT FOR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT GIVESTHE FRONT THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY NEED NOT NEGOTIATE AND IS THEREFORE A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO NEGOTIATIONS.

4. NAMIBIA - IVORY COAST SUPPORTS THE CONTACT GROUP EFFORTS ON NAMIBIA AND BELIEVES THAT A UN FORCE SHOULD
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SUPERVISE ELECTIONS THERE. THEY FULLY AGREE THAT WALVIS BAY IS PART OF NAMIBIA.

5. ZAIRE - THE MOST INTERESTING AND NEWEST INDICATOR OF IVORY COAST'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH ON AFRICAN PROBLEMS IS ITS REACTION TO THE SITUATION IN SHABA. HOUPHOUET HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO US PREVIOUSLY THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH OUR EARLIER LACK OF RESPONSE IN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. HE GREETED OUR SHABA AIRLIFT WITH ENTHUSIASTIC SUPPORT. HOWEVER, THERE WAS A HEATED INTERNAL ARGUMENT IN IVORY COAST OVER PARTICIPATION IN THE AFRICAN FORCES IN SHABA. IVORY COAST FIRST PUBLICLY INDICATED SUPPORT ONLY FOR FOOD AND SUPPLIES. IT WAS FINALLY DECIDED TO SEND A 105 MAN MEDICAL TEAM, NO TROOPS. APPARENTLY IT WAS BELIEVED THAT SENDING TROOPS TO SHABA MIGHT BE DOMESTICALLY UNPOPULAR. IVORY COAST'S RECONSIDERATION OF ITS FOREIGN DEBT AND BUDGETARY SITUATION PROBABLY ALSO PLAYED A ROLE IN THE DEBATE. WE ALSO HAVE A REPORT THAT THE IVORY COAST MEDICAL TEAM IS NOT BEING SUPPORTED IN SHABA AND IS NOT EMPLOYED. FOR THESE REASONS HOUPHOUET WOULD PROBABLY BE RECEPTIVE TO PROPOSALS FOR AN EARLY WITHDRAWAL OF THE FORCES. HE

IS PROBABLY CONCERNED THAT ANY FUTURE DECISIONS ON SHABA HAVE AN AFRICAN CHARACTER AND MOST LIKELY SUPPORTS EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE REFORM BY MOBUTU.

6. THE HORN - HOUPHOUET HAS REPEATEDLY EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE HORN. HE WROTE THE PRESIDENT IN JANUARY URGING THAT WE ASSIST RECONCILIATION BETWEEN KENYA AND SOMALIA. WE INFORMED HIM THAT OUR EFFORTS IN THIS DIRECTION HAS NOT BEEN FRUITFUL AND

EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR HIS EFFORTS.

7. ANGOLA - HOUPHOUET MADE BEHIND THE SCENES EFFORTS LAST YEAR TO BRING ABOUT A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE
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UNITA AND MPLA FACTIONS IN ANGOLA AND URGED US TO DO THE SAME. HE WAS HAPPY TO HEAR OF THE MCHENRY VISIT TO ANGOLA AND WOULD LIKE TO HEAR THE RESULTS.

8. DECADE ON RACISM - IVORIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AKE RECENTLY URGED AMBASSADOR DALLEY TO RECONSIDER THE USG DECISION NOT TO ATTEND THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IN AUGUST ON THE DECADE ON RACISM. HE THOUGHT THAT IF THE US WAS NOT THERE TO SUPPORT ITS POINT OF VIEW THE MEETING WOULD GO BADLY FROM THE U.S. STANDPOINT, ESPECIALLY ON ZIONISM AND RACISM. AKE HIMSELF HAD DECIDED NOT TO GO.

9. CARTER VISIT - PRIOR TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S VISIT TO AFRICA IN APRIL HOUPHOUET EXPRESSED THE DESIRE THAT THE PRESIDENT NOT NEGLECT THE FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES AND SUGGESTED A MEETING WITH SEVERAL FRANCOPHONE CHIEFS OF STATE IN ABIDJAN. HE HAS ALSO INDICATED POSSIBLE INTEREST IN A TRIP TO THE US ALTHOUGH HE IS KNOWN NOT TO LIKE AIR TRAVEL. HE HAS CORRESPONDED WITH PRESIDENT CARTER ON AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

10. MIDDLE EAST - HOUPHOUET HAS A CONTINUING INTEREST IN OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. HIS OWN EFFORTS INVOLVED CONTACTS WITH ELEMENTS OF THE PREVIOUS ISRAELI GOVERNMENT (HE MET WITH RABIN AT ONE POINT) AND WITH ELEMENTS OF THE PLO. MORE RECENTLY THE EGYPTIANS HAVE APPROACHED HOUPHOUET FOR SUPPORT ON SADAT'S PEACE EFFORTS, WHICH HAS BEEN FORTHCOMING PRIVATELY. ISRAELI ENVOYS VISITED ABIDJAN LAST DECEMBER. HOUPHOUET APPEARS NOT READY TO RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. THE PLO HAS SOUGHT IVORIAN MEDIATION IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH SADAT. HOUPHOUET IS BELIEVED TO SUPPORT PLO PARTICIPA-
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TION IN ANY MIDDLE EAST PEACE TALKS. VANCE

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